

Growing Healthy Families

WIC Newsletter • Summer 2012

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VERMONT DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH • 1-800-649-4857 • www.healthvermont.gov

Farm to Family: In season all summer!

What is Farm to Family?

The Vermont Farm to Family Program provides WIC participants age 6 months and older with free coupons to buy fresh vegetables and fruits at participating farmers' markets around the state. When you attend a Farm to Family activity you will receive \$30 in coupons to spend on fresh vegetables and fruits for your family at the farmers' market.

"I had never been to a farmers' market before and really enjoyed going every week! It was nice to talk to the local farmers about how they grew their produce and knowing it came from Vermont, not out of state or out of the country. I hope this program continues."

— Putney

Farm to Family coupons can be used from June 25 until October 31.

For a complete list of participating markets visit http://dcf.vermont.gov/esd/farm_to_family

Where do I get Farm to Family coupons?

Get your coupons at a fun nutrition activity run by the staff from your WIC office. Check the insert of this newsletter for dates and times of the activities being held in your community. There are a limited number of free coupon books available.

Coupons are for use by the recipient and may not be sold or given away.

Puzzle Corner

2



1



3



Draw a line from each number to the correct amount of items.

Strong kids and moms eat kale!

by Caroline Homan

Growing up I didn't eat a lot of kale. If I had seen the "Eat More Kale" slogan, I probably would have said, "huh?" But now, I get it.

Kale and other dark leafy greens (a large category that includes spinach, arugula, Swiss chard,

romaine lettuce, and even broccoli), are so nutritious that if we eat one of these greens every day, we're doing a great thing for ourselves and our kids.

Dark leafy greens supply our bodies with folate (otherwise known as

folic acid) as well as vitamins C and K. Over in the mineral department, they are high in calcium and iron, which we need during pregnancy AND to shore up our strength during the many sleepless days and nights that come after! Our kids benefit from these vegetables, too: Did you know that foods high in calcium and iron help reduce the impact of any lead in the blood supply?

Different greens come into season at different points in the summer. Go for what looks fresh and appealing to you, and try something new. Greens store well in the fridge in a plastic produce bag that is loosely twisted closed, with plenty of airflow around the leaves. They are best eaten within about a week, although kale will keep longer, about 2 weeks. Wash well.

Caroline Homan is the Food & Nutrition Education Coordinator for City Market / Onion River Co-op. She lives in Burlington with her two children, ages 5 and 2.

Tips for getting kids to eat kale:

- Consider planting kale — it's amazingly easy to grow, and is often the last vegetable standing in the garden when cool weather hits (plant seeds in mid-summer for fall harvest).
- Have kids help you "pop" the leaves off the stems.
- Pretend to be bunnies and try a little nibble raw, straight from the leaf.
- Chop a couple of leaves of kale VERY finely and sprinkle at the last minute into soups and claim that it's just "herbs" — you'd be amazed at how well this works.
- Have kids dip a small leaf of kale into their own salad dressing, or if they don't like the acidity of vinegar, into a little olive oil mixed with sea salt.
- Compare different varieties of kale with your kids at the farmer's market. Do you have a kid who likes purple? Great! Try purple-stemmed "Russian" kale. Got a kid who's obsessed with dinosaurs? Perfect! Point out the cool, bumpy texture of so-called "Dinosaur" (Lacinato) kale.
- Make kale pesto the same way you would make basil pesto, or when you make basil pesto, mix in a few leaves of kale.

Black Bean and Vegetable Quesadillas *Operation Frontline*

½ of a 15 oz. can black beans, drained
½ tablespoon olive oil
1 medium carrot, peeled and diced
(or any fresh veggie in season!)
1 small zucchini, diced
1 cup chopped kale leaves
½ cup corn
6 whole wheat flour tortillas
½ cup grated low fat cheddar cheese
1 small bunch spinach or lettuce, shredded
½ cup plain low-fat yogurt
½ cup salsa
salt and pepper
parsley or cilantro, chopped (optional)

Makes 3 adult servings or 6 preschool servings

In skillet, heat oil and sauté carrots until semi-soft. Add zucchini, kale and corn, and cook until tender, about 8 minutes. Add black beans to vegetables and cook until beans are heated. Season with salt and pepper.

Preheat oven to 350°. Place 3 tortillas on cookie sheet. Spoon bean mixture onto tortillas. Sprinkle each with ⅓ of the cheese and top with another tortilla. Bake until cheese melts. Cut tortilla into wedges (like a pizza) and serve on a plate with shredded spinach or lettuce. Spoon salsa and yogurt over the wedges and garnish with parsley or cilantro.

Nutrient analysis per adult serving: calories 335; protein 17 grams; carbohydrate 66 grams; fat 6 grams; sodium 880 milligrams

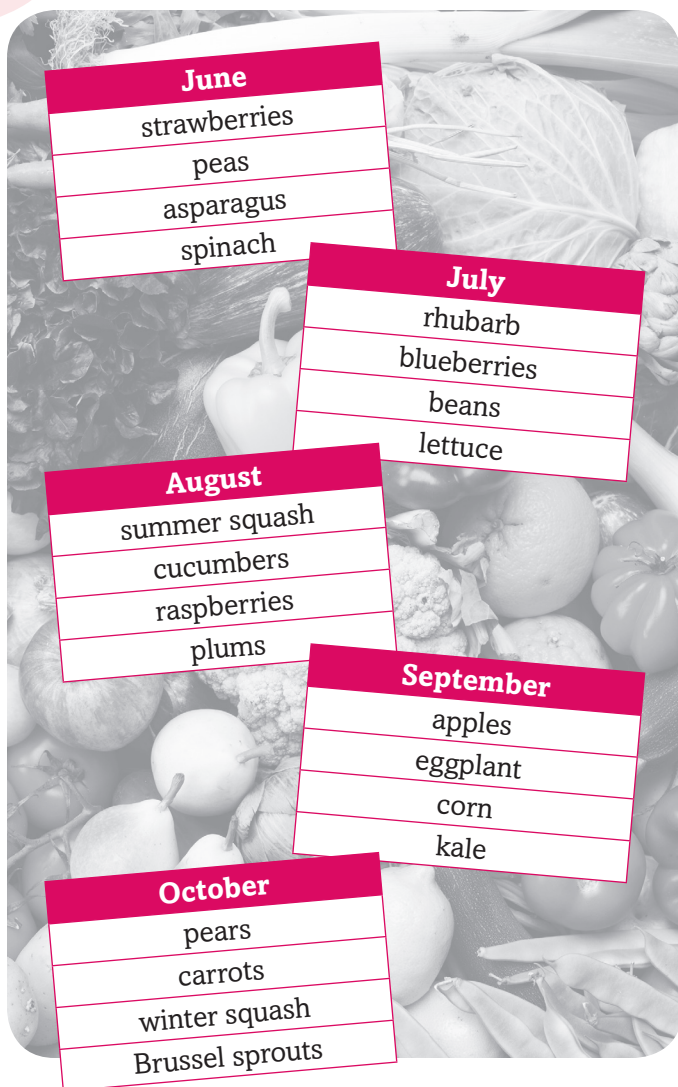
New! Local product

Vermont WIC is happy to offer the Vermont Soy Company's soy milk for those families who choose it. Women can request soy milk in place of regular milk. Children need to have the OK from their doctor to substitute soy milk. Check at your next WIC visit if you are interested in choosing soy milk.

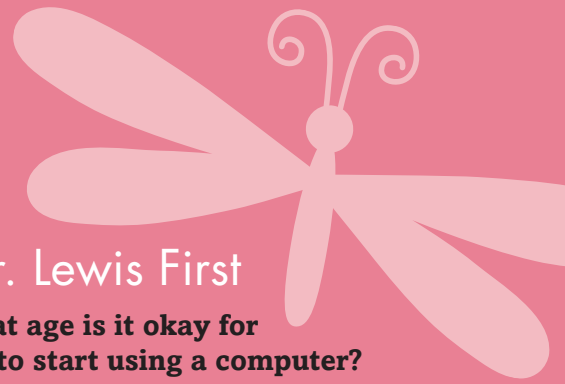
What's in season?

Ever wonder what's in season in Vermont during the summer and fall? You're not alone! It helps to know what you can expect at the Farmers' Market when you head out to spend your Farm to Family coupons.

Although there are many choices available, here are some fruits and vegetables you can expect to see this summer and fall:



Get a full calendar of what's in season by going to www.vermontagriculture.com/buylocal/learn then click on Produce Calendar or ask at your local WIC office.



Ask Dr. Lewis First

Q: At what age is it okay for my child to start using a computer?

Dr. First: This question is so timely that I thought I would log in this month and provide some information on when and how to best use technology with younger children. Technology is certainly all around us — and like television, there is no strong evidence that introducing children under age three to computer games or toys improves their overall development. In fact, the American Academy of Pediatrics discourages use of all computerized technology with infants and toddlers less than 3 years of age because these devices get in the way of human interactions which, at this young age, are critical.

In fact, introducing computer time into an infant or toddler's life before age three may actually hamper their physical and social development. Even after age three playing computer games for hours on end reduces interactions with others which is needed to develop social skills. It may limit gross motor development by taking time away from playing outside and can over-stimulate a child so they are less able to focus on quieter activities like listening to a story.

There is also the challenge of a child sitting for long periods of time while playing a game which can result in snacking, often on unhealthy foods. This can lead to an increased risk of your child gaining excess weight.

The bottom line is don't surrender your important role as parent and role model to a computer. Limit television and computer usage for children from age three upward to no more than 1–2 hours per day and make it zero hours before age 3. When you input to your children your own parenting time rather than a computer's, the output developmentally and socially will be far greater than any computer game or technology can ever provide — and that's data worth storing in your memory bank.

Dr. Lewis First is Chief of Pediatrics at Vermont Children's Hospital at Fletcher Allen Health Care.

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~Bob Marley

Sun is shining.
Weather is sweet.
Make you wanna
move your dancing
feet.

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